

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 03846 261642Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-02 ICA-20 SP-02 PM-05 /063 W
-----126890 270408Z /11

R 261610Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1256
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

UNCLAS TUNIS 3846

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, SHUM, TS
SUBJ: ER-RAI DIRECTOR BEN AMMAR FOUND GUILTY OF DEFAMATION
OF ARMY

RE: TUNIS 3477

1. MILITARY TRIBUNAL MET ON MAY 25 TO RENDER JUDGMENT ON CHARGES THAT HASSIB BEN AMMAR, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL DEMOCRAT WEEKLY, ER-RAI, HAD DEFAMED HONOR OF ARMY BY PUBLISHING CRITICAL "LETTER TO THE EDITOR" ON JANUARY 19. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE CHARGES WERE UPHELD, AND BEN AMMAR WAS FINED 300 DINARS (\$800).

2. WHILE BEN AMMAR HAS CONTINUED TO INSIST ON HIS INNOCENCE, WE UNDERSTAND IT WAS EXPECTED TRIBUNAL WOULD FIND AGAINST HIM. COURCE CLOSE TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TELL US THAT 300 DINAR FINE IS CONSIDERED RELATIVELY LIGHT PENALTY; HE COULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN PRISON SENTENCE AS WELL AS LARGER FINE.

3. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, CONDEMNATION CARRIES NO RESTRICTIONS ON BEN AMMAN'S CIVIL OR POLITICAL RIGHTS.
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HE IS STILL FREE TO SERVE AS ER RAI'S DIRECTOR AND TO INTEREST HIMSELF IN POLITICS. BEN AMMAN IS NOT TOTALLY OUT OF WOODS, HOWEVER. WE UNDERSTAND THAT HE IS INVOLVED IN A CIVIL COURT CASE STEMING FROM PUBLICATION OF ANOTHER LETTER ON FEBRUARY 9 AND THAT A THIRD SET OF CHARGES MAY BE BROUGHT AGAINST HIM FOR OFFENDING THE HONOR OF THE POLICE.

MULCAHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Draft Date: 26 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
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